

Essentially a nature trail rather than a walking route. Short but interesting, offering a number of stopping off points where you can chill out in season. My choice always would be mid-week when the area is quiet.

The route is described clockwise and begins at the Errwood Hall car park (largest red dot). Follow the tarmac, noting the high wall on the right which has played host to Redstarts in my experience. After the end of the low drystone wall on the left, keep an eye open for Pied Flycatchers. There every year.

Continue until the wooden pedestrian gate on the left appears in view. Just before that gate there is a vehicular access gate on the right. Take the inclined trail from that vehicular access gate, back towards Errwood Hall.

Where you meet a continuous stretch of higher drystone wall on the right, the wooded areas behind the wall is noted for Spotted Flycatchers. I like to climb the bank on the left, opposite the wooded area, then settle down quietly and wait for signs of life in the trees. Long lens at the ready sat atop my spiked monopod.

Continue on that track until you reach the crossroad and finger post. Turn left up the track and keep climbing. Bear right at the fork in the trail and continue until you reach a drystone wall with dilapidated fencing and a gateway puncturing the wall. Pass through the gateway and continue along the straight path downhill.

When you reach the right hand turn in the trail (Shooter's Clough on the map), you will see a small pond straight ahead (blue dot on the map). Time can be spent there. At that elevation early spring is less likely to deliver Dragonflies. You may however see all the other usual pond life, small as the pond is. That includes the hardy Damselflies. Other routes pick up this pond as well but those routes not generally in season routes for me.

Returning to the trail downhill that whole route is rich in flora and at times can be challenging underfoot with the smooth rocky outcrops and slippery surfaces when wet. Keep an eye open for basking Lizards. You will ultimately reach the brook. Ponder there quietly for a while hoping to catch a glimpse of something moving.

Beyond the brook, the meandering trail quickly leads to another crossroad on the track and you turn right at the fingerpost, which leads back towards Errwood Hall and the car park. The drystone walls along this path play host to Lizards if you observe from a safe distance initially, say 4 metres.

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Distance: 4.2km (GPS)